United Nations A/C.3/66/SR.41

General Assembly
Sixty-sixth session

Official Records

Distr.: General
6 February 2012

Original: English

Third Committee

Summary record of the 41st meeting
Held at Headquarters, New York, on Thursday, 3 November 2011, at 3 p.m.

Chair: Mr. Haniff ..... (Malaysia)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.10 p.m.

Agenda item 62: Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, questions relating to refugees, returnees and displaced persons and humanitarian questions (*continued*) (A/C.3/66/L.63)

Draft resolution A/C.3/66/L.63: Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

1. **Mr. Rasmussen** (Denmark), introducing draft resolution A/C.3/66/L.63, said that for the past 10 years the Nordic countries had coordinated the draft resolution and had focused on essential policy elements, using agreed text and limiting changes to the addition of certain issues that deserved special attention.

2. The draft resolution highlighted the commemoration of the sixtieth anniversary of the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees and the fiftieth anniversary of the 1961 Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness. In addition, some new text drew attention to the series of regional dialogues with refugee women and girls undertaken by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees to highlight the importance of pursuing work on their protection, and also commended the High Commissioner and the States for launching the Global Resettlement Solidarity Initiative during the crisis in Libya in April.

3. **Mr. Gustafik** (Secretary of the Committee) said that Austria, Belarus, Burkina Faso, Burundi, the Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Ethiopia, Israel, Kyrgyzstan, Monaco, Portugal, Romania, Thailand and the United Republic of Tanzania had joined the sponsors.

Agenda item 69: Promotion and protection of human rights (*continued*)

(b) Promotion and protection of human rights: Human rights questions, including alternative approaches for improving the effective enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms (*continued*) (A/C.3/66/L.32, L.33, L.34, L.35, L.36, L.40 and L.42)

Draft resolution A/C.3/66/L.32: Enhancement of international cooperation in the field of human rights

4. **Ms. Astiasarán Arias** (Cuba), speaking as coordinator of the working group on human rights of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, said that the draft resolution was presented on an annual basis and its purpose was to recognize that the strengthening of international cooperation in the sphere of human rights was essential to achieve fully the objectives of the United Nations, including the promotion and protection of all the human rights.

5. The modifications introduced addressed technical innovations above all, but a special reference had been made to the recently adopted political declaration to commemorate the tenth anniversary of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action.

Draft resolution A/C.3/66/L.33: Promotion of equitable geographical distribution in the membership of the human rights treaty bodies

6. **Ms. Astiasarán Arias** (Cuba), speaking as coordinator of the working group on human rights of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, said that the draft resolution affirmed the importance of continuing efforts to reduce the imbalance in the actual composition of the members of several treaty bodies, which tended to be detrimental to the election of experts from some regional groups. The current draft resolution requested the Secretary-General to submit a comprehensive report on its implementation.

7. **Mr. Gustafik** (Secretary of the Committee) said that the United Republic of Tanzania had joined the sponsors.

Draft resolution A/C.3/66/L.34: Human rights and cultural diversity

8. **Ms. Astiasarán Arias** (Cuba), speaking as coordinator of the working group on human rights of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, said that the purpose of the draft resolution was to recognize that all cultures and civilizations contributed to the mutual enrichment of the cultural life of mankind and to acknowledge the importance of respect and understanding for religious and cultural diversity.

9. The text had been updated slightly, stressing the important contribution of culture to development and the achievement of national development objectives and internationally-agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals.

10. **Mr. Gustafik** (Secretary of the Committee) said that the United Republic of Tanzania had joined the sponsors.

Draft resolution A/C.3/66/L.35: The right to development

11. **Ms. Astiasarán Arias** (Cuba), speaking as coordinator of the working group on human rights of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, said that the current draft resolution underscored the events held to commemorate the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Declaration on the Right to Development and endorsed the conclusions and recommendations of the Working Group on the Right to Development of the Human Rights Council at its eleventh session.

Draft resolution A/C.3/66/L.36: Human rights and unilateral coercive measures

12. **Ms. Astiasarán Arias** (Cuba), speaking as coordinator of the working group on human rights of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, said that, on numerous occasions, the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries had stated its opposition to coercive measures used as tools to exert political and economic pressure against any country, and particularly developing countries. It had also indicated that, under no circumstances, could a country be deprived of its means of development and subsistence.

13. The draft resolution reaffirmed that States must abstain from adopting unilateral coercive measures contrary to international law and the Charter of the United Nations. The changes introduced in the current version included technical innovations and reference to the elderly and persons with disabilities.

Draft resolution A/C.3/66/L.40: International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance

14. **Mr. Cabouat** (France), introducing draft resolution A/C.3/66/L.40 on behalf of the main sponsors, Argentina, France and Morocco, said that Bulgaria, Croatia, Cuba, the Czech Republic, Ethiopia, the Netherlands, Panama, Slovakia, Swaziland, Sweden, Switzerland, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of) had joined the sponsors.

15. The International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance had entered into force on 23 December 2010 following ratification by the twentieth State, significantly extending the protection offered to victims. The Convention had now been signed by 90 States and 30 States had become parties to it.

16. He commended the Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances on the assistance it had been providing for almost 30 years to the families of victims in order to elucidate cases of enforced disappearance.

17. **Mr. Gustafik** (Secretary of the Committee) said that Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Ecuador, Eritrea, Iceland, Kazakhstan, Mongolia and the Republic of Moldova had also joined the sponsors.

Draft resolution A/C.3/66/L.42: Subregional Centre for Human Rights and Democracy in Central Africa

18. **Ms. Muhimpundu** (Burundi) said that Algeria, Angola, Chile, the Democratic Republic of the Congo Ethiopia, Ghana, Madagascar, Nigeria, Rwanda, Sao Tome and Principe and Togo had joined the sponsors.

19. The aim of the draft resolution was to ensure that the Centre could continue to support member States achieve greater promotion and protection of human rights and democracy. The Centre was mandated to reinforce the relevant national institutions and had also contributed to the establishment of transitional justice mechanisms in the countries of the subregion affected by conflict. The current version of the draft resolution had been revised to reflect recent events.

20. **Mr. Gustafik** (Secretary of the Committee) said that Burkina Faso, Chad, the Comoros, Eritrea, Morocco, the Niger, the United Republic of Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe had joined the sponsors.

(c) Promotion and protection of human rights: Human rights situations and reports of special rapporteurs and representatives (*continued*) (A/C.3/66/L.54, L.55 and L.56)

Draft resolution A/C.3/66/L.54: Situation of human rights in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea

21. **Mr. Herczyński** (Poland), introducing the draft resolution on behalf of the main sponsors, the European Union and Japan, said that Palau had also joined the sponsors.

22. The General Assembly had adopted resolutions on the situation of human rights in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea driven by a shared concern about the grave, widespread and systematic human

rights abuses documented in the reports of the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the country, as well as in the reports of the Secretary-General.

23. The text took into account some positive steps registered during the past year, including some cooperation with United Nations agencies in conducting a rapid food security assessment in the country. Nevertheless, the positive developments were few, and substantive changes on the ground were needed.

24. The sponsors of the resolution had informed the delegation of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea about the draft, but as in previous years, the delegation had refused to engage in discussions. They hoped that the text reflected the concerns of all parties who were genuinely interested in giving voice to the concerns of the people of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and that it would be adopted with the broadest support.

25. Lastly, some minor editorial changes were required. In subparagraph (a) (viii) of the first operational paragraph, the word "on" should be inserted after the word "especially", and in the sixth line of subparagraph (h) of the fifth operational paragraph, the word "and" should be deleted.

Draft resolution A/C.3/66/L.55: Situation of human rights in Myanmar

26. **Mr. Herczyński** (Poland), introducing the draft resolution on behalf of the European Union, said that Liechtenstein had joined the sponsors.

27. For a number of years, the General Assembly had adopted resolutions on the situation of human rights in Myanmar, reflecting the serious concern of the international community with the situation in the country. However, over the past few months some important steps had been taken by the Government towards national reconciliation.

28. The draft text was based on the reports to the General Assembly by the Secretary-General, as well as those of the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Myanmar and reflected the positive steps taken by the Government, as well as the commitments made. It also addressed the continuing concerns with regard to the situation of human rights in the country, including those of ethnic minorities, and urged the Government to address the issue of justice and accountability as a central element of national reconciliation and the transition to democracy.

29. The sponsors preferred a consensus approach and had drafted the text with that in mind. Discussions had been held with the country concerned during the drafting process.

30. Some minor editorial changes should be made. In the third line of the sixth preambular paragraph a comma should be added after the words "including prisoners". In the first line of paragraph 8, the word "Notes" should be amended to "Noting" and, in the second line, the word "and" should be deleted after the comma. In the second line of paragraph 9, the word "and" should be added after the comma, and in the fifth line, the words "and further" should be added after the comma.

Draft resolution A/C.3/66/L.56: Situation of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran

31. **Mr. Rishchynski** (Canada), introducing the draft resolution on behalf of the main sponsors, said that Andorra had become a sponsor.

32. The draft resolution had been prepared carefully to ensure accuracy and to reflect the findings of the Secretary-General's report (A/65/361) and the report of the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran (A/66/374). Concerns raised in past resolutions remained unaddressed; thus the situation called for continued international attention. The draft resolution called on Iran to address the concerns and to fully respect its human rights obligations in law and in practice.

33. As the only United Nations body with universal membership responsible for addressing international human rights issues, the Third Committee must live up to its responsibilities. Having requested a report from the Secretary-General, it must now consider it and take action. The sponsors hoped that other delegations would join them in supporting the draft resolution.

Statements made in exercise of the right of reply

34. **Mr. Jang** Il Hun (Democratic People's Republic of Korea) said that his delegation categorically rejected draft resolution A/C.3/66/L.54, which was nothing more than a political strategy aimed at isolating and stifling the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

The European Union should ponder the merits of tabling the draft resolution.

35. When the resolution was first adopted in the former Commission on Human Rights in 2003, the traditional practice of prior notification to and negotiation with the concerned country was completely ignored. The whole process of submission and adoption of the draft resolution clearly showed that it pursued ulterior political purposes.

36. No country could claim to have a perfect record on human rights issues and most of the human rights violations debated by the Committee, such as discrimination and violence against women and children or freedom of expression and opinion, had no relevance to the reality in his country. The main sponsors of the draft resolution should reflect on the human rights record of their own countries, where social evils and violations were prevalent, and take measures to address them before criticizing other countries.

37. The universal periodic review mechanism of the Human Rights Council, which treated the human rights situations of all countries on an equal footing, was now in full operation. The adoption of country-specific resolutions was therefore an anachronism, and an abuse of human rights that ran counter to the spirit and purpose of the United Nations Charter.

38. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea would not give in to such pressure and confrontation and would firmly defend and safeguard the socialist system chosen by its people, because it guaranteed full enjoyment of their human rights and fundamental freedoms.

39. **Mr. Mohammad Pour Ferami** (Islamic Republic of Iran) said that the purpose of the draft resolution introduced by Canada on the situation of human rights in Iran was certainly not for the promotion and protection of human rights in his country, but rather it was a politically-motivated attack on the Government and people of Iran.

40. The crucial point was that, if Canada was really concerned about human rights situations, the draft resolution was not the way to proceed. He was not trying to counter Canada's unsubstantiated allegations by launching a counter-accusation, but he reminded the Committee of the concerns raised by the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination about the situation of minority groups in that country, and the serious concerns expressed to the Human Rights Council by the Independent Expert on minority issues regarding the systematic use of racial profiling, and excessive use of force leading to the death of young black males, in particular.

41. His delegation believed that the right way to proceed lay in the sincere willingness and determination of the countries concerned to work together and create a favourable environment based on common understanding and respect for the promotion of human rights at all levels. His country strongly believed that "name and shame" tactics, the adoption of country-specific resolutions, and the manipulation of the United Nations human rights mechanisms would not lead to mutually acceptable results.

42. His delegation strongly advised the main sponsors of the resolution to rectify their own human rights records and requested all delegations to consider the politicized nature of the draft resolution and reject the attempt to impair the credibility and integrity of the human rights mechanisms.

Agenda item 28: Advancement of women (*continued*)

(a) Advancement of women (*continued*) (A/C.3/66/L.21)

Draft resolution A/C.3/66/L.21: Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women

43. **The Chair** said he had been advised that the draft resolution contained no programme budget implications.

44. **Ms. Leveaux** (Sweden) said that Armenia, Colombia, Côte d'Ivoire, Ecuador, Egypt, Lebanon, Mali, Rwanda, San Marino, Thailand and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of) had joined the sponsors of the draft resolution.

45. **Mr. Gustafik** (Secretary of the Committee) said that Antigua and Barbuda Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belize, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, the Comoros, El Salvador, Eritrea, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Jamaica, Kyrgyzstan, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Mongolia, Morocco, Namibia, Nicaragua, the Niger, the Philippines, South Africa, Suriname, Timor-Leste, Togo, Tunisia and Uzbekistan had joined the sponsors.

46. *Draft resolution A/C.3/66/L.21 was adopted.*

47. **Ms. Phipps** (United States of America), speaking in explanation of position, said that the Obama administration was a strong supporter of the Convention and was committed to its ratification by the United States of America. However, her delegation wished to note that, by joining consensus on the resolution, which welcomed the reports of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women on five of its sessions, her Government was not indicating its agreement with the entire contents of those reports. While it concurred with much that was said in the reports, there were aspects with which it did not agree.

48. Despite the foregoing, the United States of America was a strong supporter of the goals and purposes of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women as well as of the United Nations, in general, in promoting the human rights of women around the world.

The meeting rose at 4.15 p.m.